

expression. Nevertheless, this verse, with all its limitations, bears upon it, I believe, the unquestionable stamp of genius. The quality which no imitation and no effort can catch, and concerning which, unless we deny the existence of absolute beauty, there can be no dispute, here makes its presence felt. Here is a simple and direct sincerity of feeling, coupled with a cadence and fall which take the ear an instant captive. And in the phrase-music there is a distinctive quality which even the poet's manifest adoration of Keats is not sufficient to obscure. For purity of style and classic objectivity, take this from "De Profundis":—

I hear another song
Than thine,—a song that floated o'er thy breast,
How oft in vanished years! It floats again
Unto mine ear. I hear the wondrous lyre
Of the blind bard, and see the Grecian throng
About Troy's lofty walls, and Hector slain,—
The white-stained face and blackened crest,
And great Achilles crumbling on his pyre.
Then comes Ulysses sighing for his home
Afar, leaving the ruins of old Troy
For Ithaca, where oft, a glad-faced boy,
He played amid the ripening vines, and heard
His father's voice ere he began to roam
The weary waves. His heart is stirred
With thoughts of home, and son, and wife;
And ever Circe holds him in her arms."

To feel the spell of that natural magic in which our English poetry is more rich than any other literature, let one linger a little over this enchanting lyric, so strangely entitled "Hope":—

"In shadowy calm the boat
Sleeps by the dreaming oar;
The green hills are afloat
Beside the silver shore.

Youth loists the white-winged sail,
Love takes the longing oar;—
The oft-told fairy tale
Beside the silver shore!

Soft lip to lip, and heart
To heart, and hand to hand,
And wistful eyes depart
Unto another strand:

And lovely as a star
They tremble o'er the wave,
With eager wings afar
Unto the joys they crave.

In a sweet trance they fare
Unto the wind and rain,
With wind-tossed waves of hair,
And ne'er return again.

And at the drifting side
Changed faces in the deep
They see, and changing tide,
Like phantoms in a sleep.

Slow hands furl the torn sail
Without one silver gleam,
And, sad and wan and pale,
They gave into a dream."

Two other names which I desire to consider in this survey are those of poets who have not yet formally challenged criticism by putting forth their verse in book form. I refer to Mr. Bliss Carman and Mr. A. Lampman. These two young poets, who are perhaps the most encouraging product of our new-born enthusiasm, and the most effectual support of what I claim in my opening paragraph, are entirely unlike each other in their genius; but they possess in common certain characteristics which enable me, for purposes of this review, to couple their names. They are alike in the possession of an earnestness, purpose, passion, and lyrical affluence, which remove them from the dilettante tendency of the day. They show technical skill, artistic conscience, and the breadth that comes from culture; they have the essential gift, imagination; and their inspiration, for the most part, is of the soil and of the life about them. Mr. Carman's genius, in particular, is autochthonous. Faithful to its source in atmosphere, color, and local setting, it is, nevertheless, free from our besetting fault of provincialism. In advancing such high claims as these, I might justly be expected to substantiate them by quotations; but the limits of my present space forbid more than a single extract from each, and that of the briefest. This flawless quatrain, called "Bulrushes," is from Mr. Carman:—

"When soft rich breezes hush the drowsing land
Where dragon flies float down across the stream,
Erect and swarthy in the blue light stand
These sentinels of summer's murmurous dream."

And this delicious lyric from Mr. Lampman, under the title of "Bird-Voices," renders the very quintessence of its theme:—

"The robin and sparrow a wing, in silver-throated accord;
The low soft breath of a flute, and the deep short pick of a chord,
A golden chord and a flute, where the throat of the oriole swells
Fieldward, and out of the blue the passing of bobolink bells."

Mr. Carman and Mr. Lampman have won recognition in the best American magazines, as the *Century* and *Atlantic Monthly*; and of Mr. Carman's "Low Tide on Grand Pré," which lately appeared in the latter periodical, the *Boston Beacon* says:—"Bliss Carman's poem certainly seems to herald a new poet."

THE BATTLE-CALL OF THE ANTICHRIST.*

BY FRANCIS BLAKE CROFTON.

"But one of the soldiers with a spear piered His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water."—St. John, xiv, 31.

A forethought of the fated reign of peace
Fell on the soul of Antichrist, I dreamed;
And his brow darkened, and his hate-lit eyes
Aloft glared lurid through the mist of space.
Then vast and shadowy rose the Lord of War
And shook his right hand at the far White Throne,
Thinking unutterable blasphemies.
Anon he gazed upon our shuddering world,
The while, with voice that fires or freezes souls,
He sent a circling summons on the winds
And thus to battle called his myrmidons:—

"Rouse, despot trembling for a blood-bought crown!
The smouldering flame that threatens thine own house
Hurl at another's; lead thy people on
With flaring lights of glory to their doom:
(Ever the spear
Pierces the spirit of the Prince of Peace!)

"Yoke Victory to thy chariot and ride on,
Trampling the pride of nations, Conqueror!
Let thy maimed warriors writhe alone; for thou
Art scorn of God for his vile images
(And scorn of mine
For Him who pleads for them at God's right hand).

"Pause not to reek the ruin thou hast made:
Is not the comet's course foredoomed, and thine?
One deathless name outweighs a million deaths;
And orphans' sighs are mute in the acclaim
Of multitudes.
What is the grief of Christ to me or thee?

"Aspiring statesman, watch thy time to break
The trustful slumber of a rival race
By sudden protest; shunning all the pangs
And weariness of warfare, buy thy fame
With others' blood,
(For human blood flowed in the veins of Christ).

"Flushed with a spotless triumph, patriots,
From meek defence pass on to stern revenge
And urge the war of races and bequeath
A heritage of hatred to your sons,
(For motherland
Stabbing His soul who came not to destroy")

"Wake, silent trump of holy discord! Sword
Of God and Gideon, hew the Gentiles down!
Smite for the love of graceless babes unborn
Clash, rival crosses, mock the Crucified
Blaze, lethal fires,
(I will accept the incense that He loathes!)

"Poets sublime who sway the souls of men
Sing still of arms and human hecatombs
And wrath and glory and the pride of race:
Let rhymesters mumble of love, pity, peace.
(Sing ye the spear
That glances from its victims to Christ's hand!)

"And thou, enthusiast, whose genius caught
The soul of Revolution and enchained
Its fiery essence in a song, thy strains
Again shall stir rapt throngs to fratricide:
(To arms! to arms!
(Christ mocks me with His pity from His throne!)

"Sound, trump and drum and life and clarion,
Sound to the rhythmic march of warriors,
With Christian benedictions on their pride,
And tender smiles upon their waving plumes,
(Marching in pomp
To wound the wearied spirit of their Christ!)

"Oh, pygmy pomp and blazon of man's war!
When Michael strove with Satan 'mid the stars,
There were seraphic deeds and agonies,
And not this earthly death! Nathless I crave
Great heaps of slain—
The sin of His own slayers tortured Him.

"Hail to thy memory: war of wars, that jarred
Awhile the calm of heaven, when Pride and Hate,
Galled by the still rebuke of endless love,
Rose, fought and fell; and to thy memory hail,
Symbolic spear:
That wounded the dead Christ on Calvary.

"Dear is the murderer's dagger: dear the rack
That strains the frame of one who testifies
With his last breath to Christ; dearest the spear
That stabbed Him on the Cross and stabs Him still,
Each thrust a balm
To soothe my sleepless memory in Hell."

NOTE. Most of the verses following the prelude of this poem appeared, but with many differences, in *The Canadian Monthly*. Declining rhyme unsuited to the solemnity of the subject, the writer has acted on a suggestion made by Sir E. B. Lytton in the preface to his "Lost Tales of Miletus," and has adopted an unconventional blank verse stanza. Some of the Fathers held that the Antichrist will be an arch-foe, either an incarnation of Satan himself, or the son of Satan and "the counterpart of Christ." To conceive him to be the Spirit of War, the exact antithesis to the Prince of Peace, does not seem to be more fanciful. "I am the Son of God" is the pregnant expression put by Aflert in the mouth of the first Napoleon; "Son to legends old; Dictator, assassin and torch!" The other allusions (to the author of the "Marseillaise," etc.) will be apparent to the average reader.